

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN MARCH 2006

Natural soda ash production in March was 952,000 metric tons (t), 19% higher than the previous month's production of 801,000 t, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Ending inventories were estimated to be 253,000 t, 28% higher than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in March was 1.46 million tons. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in February was 463,000 t, 8% lower than the February 2005 level of 501,000 t.

Exports and imports of soda ash in February 2006 were 322,000 t and 456 t, respectively.

The trends in cumulative soda ash statistics through February 2006, compared with those of February 2005, were as follows: production was 2% lower, imports 22% lower, exports 7% higher, ending stocks 45% lower, and apparent consumption 1% higher.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Ending stocks	
2005:			
February	858	360	1,350
March	894	285	1,410
April	928	275	1,360
May	931	259	1,510
June	932	266	1,550
July	955	297	1,550
August	893	246	1,380
September	923	296	1,480
October	898	307	1,320
November	895	292	1,310
December	922	243	1,360
Total (January-March)	2,680	XX	4,200
Year total	11,000	XX	17,000
2006:			
January	946	181	1,190 ^r
February	801	198 ^r	1,270 ^r
March	952	253 ^e	1,460
Total	2,700	XX	3,920

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. XX Not applicable.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN FEBRUARY 2006^{1,2}

Country	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)	Unit value
Mexico	72,700	\$9,620	\$132
Japan	49,000	6,160	126
Chile	35,100	5,310	152
Canada	27,600	3,940	143
Korea, Republic of	25,300	3,860	152
Saudi Arabia	21,000	2,840	135
Brazil	15,700	2,720	174
Taiwan	15,100	1,800	120
South Africa	13,300	2,440	183
Belgium	12,200	1,480	121
Other	35,700	5,630	158
Total or average	322,000	45,800	142

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²March 2006 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2006^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

Country	January	February	Total	% of total
Australia	2,450	7,010	9,460	1
Belgium	38,300	12,200	50,600	7
Brazil	51,900	15,700	67,600	9
Canada	35,000	27,600	62,600	8
Chile	31,800	35,100	66,900	9
Colombia	15,600	--	15,600	2
France	22	--	22	(3)
Guatemala	5,950	--	5,950	1
Indonesia	40,200	--	40,200	5
Japan	4,400	49,000	53,400	7
Korea, Republic of	--	25,300	25,300	3
Mexico	54,600	72,700	127,000	17
Netherlands	15,100	42	15,100	2
New Zealand	15,000	--	15,000	2
Panama	2,000	--	2,000	(3)
Peru	--	10,700	10,700	1
Portugal	10,500	5,000	15,500	2
Russia	600	--	600	(3)
Saudi Arabia	37,400	21,000	58,400	8
South Africa	6,640	13,300	19,900	3
Spain	35	33	68	(3)
Sweden	--	1	1	(3)
Taiwan	22,300	15,100	37,400	5
Thailand	21,100	--	21,100	3
United Arab Emirates	17,000	6,000	23,000	3
Venezuela	17,300	6,880	24,100	3
Total	445,000	322,000	768,000	100

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²March 2006 data were not available at time of publication.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH^{1, 2}

Period	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)
2005:		
February	807	\$220
March	1,470	351
April	511	186
May	745	158
June	668	183
July	602	208
August	685	227
September	270	116
October	441	172
November	768	238
December	596	243
Total (January-February)	1,450	378
Year total	8,210	2,460
2006:		
January	673	221
February	456	179
Total	1,130	400

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²March 2006 data were not available at time of publication.

³Cost, insurance, and freight value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Imports	Exports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2005:						
February	858,000	807	330,000	28,400	--	501,000
March	894,000	1,470	409,000	--	74,600	561,000
April	928,000	511	485,000	--	10,500	454,000
May	931,000	745	387,000	--	15,400	559,000
June	932,000	668	377,000	40,000	--	516,000
July	955,000	602	368,000	--	2,790	591,000
August	893,000	685	432,000	--	50,500	513,000
September	923,000	270	328,000	49,600	--	545,000
October	898,000	441	356,000	11,300	--	530,000
November	895,000	768	408,000	--	14,800	503,000
December	922,000	596	409,000	--	49,600	563,000
Total	11,000,000	8,210	4,680,000	--	95,000	6,380,000
2006:						
January	946,000	673	445,000	--	61,800	563,000
February	801,000	456	322,000	16,600 ^r	--	463,000
March	952,000	NA	NA	55,200 ^e	--	NA
January-February	1,750,000	1,130	768,000	--	45,100	1,030,000

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. NA Not available. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.